

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please add new claims 14-21. All pending claims are reproduced below:

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1 1. (Previously amended) A computer-implemented method for processing
2 electronic messages, said method comprising:
3 receiving a message in an enterprise mail system, said message from a human
4 message sender;
5 categorizing said message by selecting a first category entry from a category
6 database comprising a plurality of category entries, each said category entry
7 containing information for handling particular incoming messages; and
8 creating a response message using said information from said first category
9 entry, said response message including a response body defined in said first
10 category entry and a set of message recipients defined in said first category
11 entry.

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1 2. (Previously amended) The method of claim 1 wherein one of said set of
2 message recipients comprises a carbon copy recipient.

1 3. (Previously amended) The method of claim 1 wherein one of said set of
2 message recipients comprises a blind carbon copy recipient.

SUB E17

1 4. (Previously amended) A computer implemented method for processing

2 electronic messages, said method comprising:

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3 receiving a first message into an enterprise mail system, said first message from a
4 first human message sender;
5 storing said first message in a message database;

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6 assigning a category entry from a category database to said first message, said
7 category entry containing information for handling particular incoming
8 messages;
9 delivering said first message to a first enterprise mail system user; and
10 providing a template response message to said first enterprise mail system user
11 using information in said category entry, said template response message
12 including a set of message recipients defined in said category entry.

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1 5. (Previously amended) The method of claim 4 wherein assigning a category
2 entry from a category database to said first message is performed by a rule processor.

1 6. (Previously amended) The method of claim 4 wherein assigning a category
2 entry from a category database to said first message is performed by said first enterprise
3 and system user.

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1 7. (Previously amended) The method of claim 4 wherein providing a template
2 response message further comprises:
3 providing a set of default message body sections for said template response
4 message.

1 8. (Original) The method of claim 7 wherein one of said set of default message
2 body sections comprises a salutation.

1 9. (Original) The method of claim 7 wherein one of said set of default message
2 body sections comprises a body header.

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1 10. (Original) The method of claim 7 wherein one of said set of default message
2 body sections comprises a closing.

D11 1 11. (Original) The method of claim 7 wherein one of said set of default message
2 body sections comprises a footer.

D12 1 12. (Previously added) The method of claim 4 wherein said message database
2 comprises a relational database.

D13 1 13. (Previously amended) The method of claim 1 wherein one of said set of
2 message recipients comprises said human message sender.

1 14. (New) An electronic mail processing system comprising:
2 an incoming message server;
3 an incoming mail receiver, communicatively coupled to the incoming message
4 server, for analyzing contents of received messages, assigning the received
5 messages to at least one category, and automatically generating response
6 messages according to category parameters; and
7 a category database, communicatively coupled to the incoming mail receiver, for
8 maintaining a list of categories and parameters associated with each category.

1 15. (New) The electronic mail processing system of claim 14, wherein the
2 incoming message server uses an SMTP protocol.

1 16. (New) The electronic mail processing system of claim 14, wherein the
2 incoming message server uses a POP protocol.

SUB E27 1 17. (New) A method for processing electronic mail messages, the method
2 comprising:
3 receiving an electronic mail message;

4 analyzing the contents of the received electronic mail message;
5 responsive to the analysis of the contents of the message, associating the
6 electronic mail message with a message category; and
7 automatically generating a skeleton response message to at least one recipient,
8 wherein the recipients are selected responsive to associating the electronic
9 mail message with the message category.

1 18. (New) The method of claim 17 wherein the analysis of the contents of the
2 received electronic mail message is performed automatically.

1 19. (New) The method of claim 17 wherein the analysis of the contents of the
2 received electronic mail message is performed manually.

DI4
1 20. (New) An electronic mail processing system comprising:
2 receiving means for receiving an electronic mail message;
3 analyzing means, coupled to the receiving means, for analyzing the contents of
4 the received electronic mail message;
5 associating means, coupled to the analyzing means, for associating the electronic
6 mail message with a message category responsive to the analysis of the
7 contents of the message; and
8 generating means, coupled to the analyzing means, automatically generating a
9 skeleton response message to at least one recipient, wherein the recipients are
10 selected responsive to associating the electronic mail message with the
11 message category.

1 21. (New) A computer program product stored on a computer readable
2 medium and containing instructions to control a computer processor to
3 execute the steps of:
4 receiving an electronic mail message;

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5 analyzing the contents of the received electronic mail message;
6 responsive to the analysis of the contents of the message, associating the
7 electronic mail message with a message category; and
8 automatically generating a skeleton response message to at least one recipient,
9 wherein the recipients are selected responsive to associating the electronic
10 mail message with the message category.
